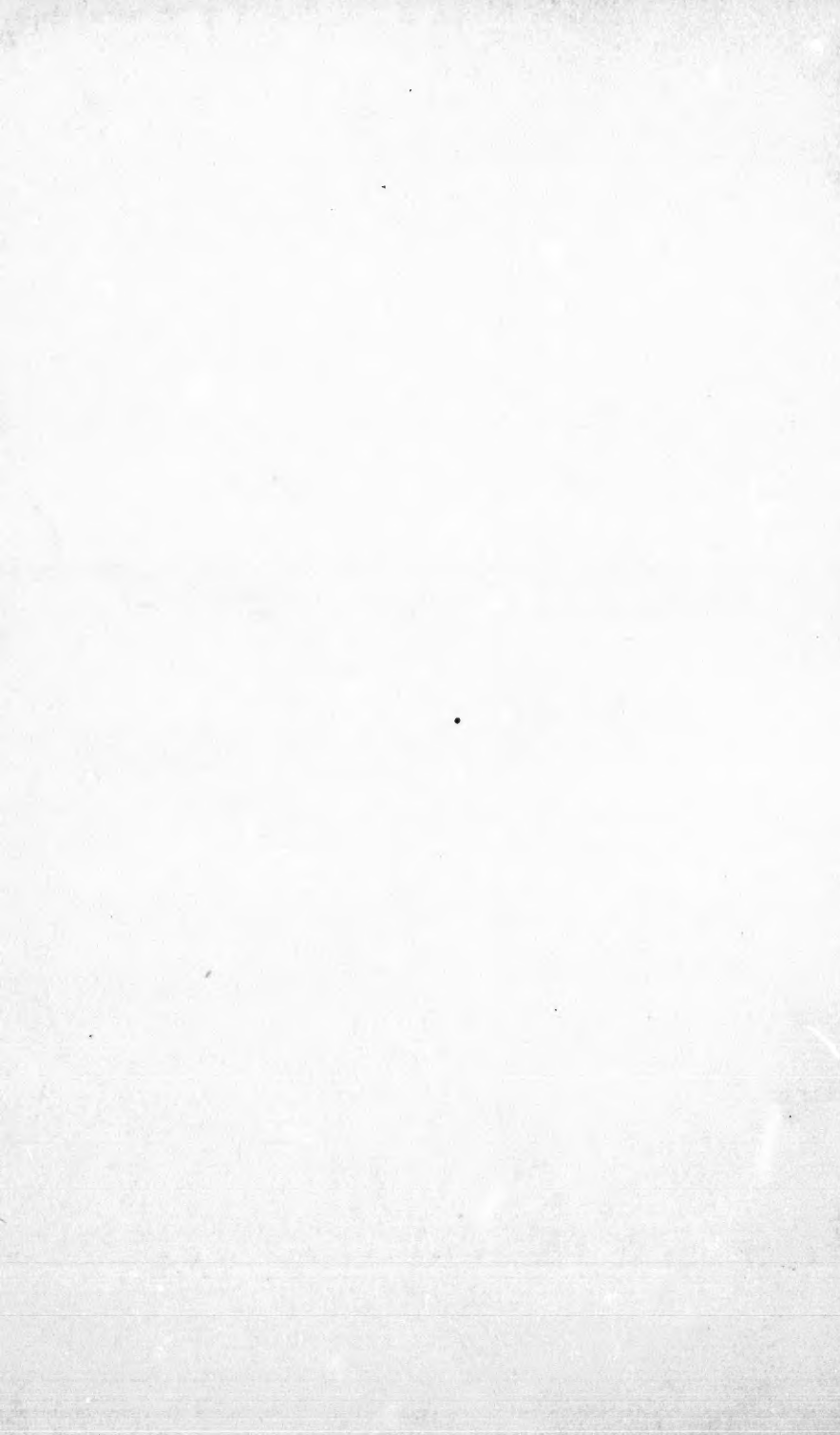




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A FEW THOUGHTS

... ON THE ...

SUBJECT OF LOYALTY



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AN ESSAY SUBMITTED BY
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A Few Thoughts on the Subject of Loyalty

“Malo mori quam foedari.”



Any inquiry into the moral outfit of humanity soon brings us to the conclusion that there are certain traits which must have formed elemental parts of human nature from the first. What is Loyalty

A comparison of different conditions amongst peoples provokes investigation as to cause, whereupon, one after another, actions stand ranged for our review, they give place to sentiments, sentiments resolve to principles, and these sift down to a few master motives at the back of which stand what ?

Religion alone offers to view a likely source for these original and innate principles of humanity. They are God-endowed.

The word “ought” exists in every mind, a link binding it to others. The idea of duty towards those with whom we are in any sort connected, the great master principle of loyalty, we find to be an intrinsic part of our nature, and that not only in the A natural quality.

primitive ties, filial and tribal, but also in adoptive relations, such as friendship.

It is an axiom of man's moral nature. The early history of any people can furnish examples of loyalty as pure and magnanimous as the annals of advanced civilization.

We have a double instance of devoted loyalty in the case of Wawətam, an Ojibwa Chief, who, under stress of difficulties and conflicting impulses, managed, at much risk and expense to himself to save the life of his friend, an English trader, while at the same time preserving unrevealed the tactics of

*Ses Parkman's
"Conspiracy of
Pontiac." — The
Massacre of 1763

of his tribe. (*) A loyalty the more striking because the friendship appears to have been wholly on the side of the Indian, and in no wise owing to favor or kindness from the white man.

Gratitude has been defined as "justice made beautiful." Loyalty is duty (whether self-imposed or not) made lovely. Mingled with the obligation implied in the root of the word, over and above the exactions of the "*loi*," there is the hint of fidelity, of obedience, of reverence, of trust, of love, of enthusiasm.

A great quality

So many brilliant examples have drawn it out to the measure of their noblest self-surrender and most devoted service, that it cannot easily contract to fit a bare discharge of duty. Precedent leads us to expect with the quality large perquisites to the credit of humanity.

No galled and sorry drudge is true loyalty, but so full blooded and gallant as fitly to bear against all odds the flower of chivalry, heroism, and generous emulation.

s value in moral
equipment.

Of its value as a component of character there can be no question, and this is so universally recognized that any state-

ment of it is like saying that the sun is bright. What more noble than the voluntary surrender of life for a country, a cause? What more beautiful than the trust, devotion, self-effacement of true friendship?

We may say that we can conceive of no collection of virtues which could in the absence of this one compose an admirable character, and we can forgive many short comings, if they be counterbalanced by the possession of this great guarantee of worth. Without loyalty, expedience and impulse control action, and principle goes to the wall. And as it is the prop of private character, so is it the mainstay of the State. To what else does England owe her greatness? When Nelson uttered the speech that words made not eloquent—"England expects every man this day to do his duty," he knew that he appealed to the deepest rooted instinct of each man in the service, whatever his rank.

And so it has always been throughout the brilliant length of British history from the dim dawn when the followers of Caradoc, against terrible odds, strained to their utmost the skill and resources of the well trained Romans, instances shine thick as motes in a sunbeam, till the latest tribute to the spirit that animated them hardly more than voices the common thought of the people—

Dynamics of
Loyalty.

Who would not die for England !

 This great thought,
Through centuries of Glory handed down
By storied vault in monumental fane,
And homeless grave in lone barbaric lands,
Homeless, but not forgotten, so can thrill
With its imperious call the hearts of men,
That suddenly from dwarf ignoble lives
They rise to heights of nobleness and spurn
The languid couch of safety, to embrace
Duty and Death that evermore were twin.

Alfred Austin.

When great national issues are at stake, it is the number of fighting men, the capacity of the treasury, that is totted up and taken into account by matter of fact common-sense. But common-sense sees only half the truth, and the facts of matter are hardly more than indices to the great volume of realities of human life and nature, which must receive consideration in arriving at a fair estimate of probabilities. Russia has the largest army in the world, but the loyalty of British soldiers is the unknown quantity which make geography of no account, and renders a safe pass to India problematic.

Self-interest not
the source of
loyalty.

Age after age has produced philosophers that attribute the most valuable moral qualities to self-interest, regardless of the natural tendency to virtue and still more of the frequent conflict between the pursuit of self-interest and that of virtue. What Matthew Arnold calls "the sense in us for conduct, the sense in us for beauty" moves men strenuously and constantly to exalt some point of honor, some grace of character, far beyond any consideration of self-interest.

The element of self is necessarily a part of loyalty. One can only be said to be truly loyal to one's own Sovereign, husband, friend. That it is not on that account a selfish quality is easily proved, by carrying its manifestation to the superlative degree in which the possessor is rendered capable of complete self-sacrifice for loyalty's sake. This ingredient of self, as opposed to self-regard, affords sufficient clue to the lack of loyalty amongst certain classes. There can be no loyalty where the sense of responsibility is absent.

Conditions detrimental to loyalty

That community which is composed of a number of irresponsible persons, each working individually for the furtherance of selfish gratification, must exhibit a low moral attainment, and misery proportionate to its size. Loyalty is one of

the highest of social affections. The social affections are weakest where private desires or selfishness are strongest. St. Paul anticipated Butler in this matter when he speaks of "men of corrupt minds, lovers of their own selves, *without natural affection, traitors*" (†).

† 2 Tim. iii. 3.

While, therefore, selfishness is destructive of the social affections, self is an inseparable, a fundamental constituent in them. And since it is certain that there are in our nature perfectly disinterested passions which seek the well-being of others as their object and end without looking beyond it to self, or pleasure or happiness, (†) and since loyalty is one of these noble instincts, it would be wise to train and cultivate it to its highest possibilities.

† Sir James Mackintosh. In Dissertation on Progress of Ethical Philosophy.

Paley defines the art of life "to be that of rightly setting our habits." We know that habits are more strongly formed during the first years of a man's existence : therefore to be a fundamental working principle of his life, the sentiments or tenets and motives of loyalty must be deeply grounded in the school-boy. Some may argue that this will be subversive of that spontaneity which should distinguish the genuine sentiment. But, to be serviceable, loyalty should be built of sterner stuff.

In the days of chivalry with what sedulous care and constant monitions was the elaborate code of honor impressed on young manhood, enforced by what aversions, repugnances, and shames ! Were they the less inclined to avow "Honor pricks me on" ?

Should be a part of education.

Although far above considerations of interest even indirect, yet may loyalty be inculcated, and the natural tendency trained and strengthened, by study of the solid bases of

general welfare, the secrets of progress, the sources of degeneration and penalties of disloyalty.

True religion is love of God and goodness, but its teachings are forwarded by consideration of consequences, the lower motives of reward and punishment. We must concede the efficacy of these in dealing with unformed minds and those whose views are in a rudimentary condition.

Students of public welfare report that crime shows decided increase especially amongst the adolescent population when state education is merely secular. (§) By a parity of reasoning we cannot look for a high degree of loyalty from a generation whose training has never included the principle. It should be made basal in the education of our youth and its just demands shewn clearly and strongly.

Rome became mistress of the ancient world by force of the devoted allegiance which formed three-fourths of the piety of her sons. The same principle, according to Divine ordination in the model nation, is so slightly secondary to religion as to seem a simultaneous duty.

In any case teaching, training, and exercise, in the moral virtues must result in the strong combination of reason with right feeling, and so bring about a more intelligent following, a fuller spring of action.

The relations of the units to the whole, press for a first place amongst the lessons to arouse the incipient sense of responsibility, the development of which is to decide the value of the individual. It stands to reason that loyalty, no more than public spirit, can be expected of those who have neither part nor lot in the affairs of a community. And,

§The late Signor Borghi attributes the multiplication of crime in Italy to "lack of religious and moral instruction in the public schools."

Responsibility a necessary adjunct.

loyalty being a mental effort—a moral exercise—it makes little difference whether the exemption be actual or imaginary so long as it seem a reality. Therefore, the part necessary, however small, which any unit in the state must take and hold to the best of his ability, should be duly impressed on the young—healthy stimulus, good practical sentiment of the sort which nerves Dibdin's "Poor Jack" to unkind duty :—

" D'ye mind me, a sailor should be every inch
" All as *one as a piece of the ship*
" And with her brave the world without offering to flinch,
" From the moment the anchor's atrip.
" As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides and ends,
" Naught's a trouble from duty that springs,
" For my heart is my Poll's and my rhino's my friend's,
" And as for my life 'tis the King's.

That member of a household does not as a rule yield affectionate service to a family between whose interests and his own no slightest relation exists—the same rule obtains in larger circles. There must be some common bond, not necessarily the ignoble one of mutual comfort. Some motive bringing the higher nature into play, a call to enthusiasm, devotion and gratuitous effort, will be a powerful lever for valuable service.

Towards this naught so much conduces as a clear belief in the special work appointed to the State, the nation to which we belong. A high ideal of responsibility, a lofty aim for conduct on the part of leaders, will surely evoke enthusiastic fidelity from the best spirits among the people.

Character and circumstance provide each nation with a mission. That of Greece was the moulding of a sense of beauty ; of Rome, the perfection of martial and civic discipline. The mission of Israel was surely the evolution and upholding of moral

and physical cleanliness, in a world given over to insanitary license.

History affords no loftier enterprise and Englishmen need seek no higher work in the world than its entire inclusion in Christendom.

Here it is we find that loyalty strikes a richer keynote and occupies a place in respect to patriotism as much superior, and more potent, as a principle to a sentiment.

As distinct from
patriotism.

Both have been powerful movers in the history of mankind. Both equally have strewn "Valour's crimson bed," but while patriotism loves on a level, with eyes that scan the horizon jealous of rights and privileges, loyalty looks upward to the controlling power and lives and moves in obedience to an ordered system—to push the metaphor, is content to be, or not to be, to be a note or a rest so that the progressive harmony of his sphere be sustained.

The loyalty of the Swiss soldiers in France and Holland was not enough to prevent their enlisting as mercenaries to any Power, and so little of the feeling existed towards those who hired their allegiance, that it could not withstand the appeal to patriotism made by the *Ranz des Vaches*. It was found necessary to prohibit the playing of this air before them, because it set them all deserting.

On cultivation
of the spirit of
loyalty.

One essential of leal adherence is enthusiasm. We feel no cordial admiration for the youth whose worldly wisdom concedes other colleges to be as good as his own. Enthusiasm is the family feature marking loyalty akin to love. Both by virtue of it see farther than indifference, see the high ideal through the faulty performance, and so loyalty like true friendship estimates its objects at their highest possibilities and, by thus apprehending the future, proves its own immortality.

Since the generous emotions are significant components in the great master principle of national life, we must respect whatever tends to raise and encourage them.

Emblems and symbols in relation to Loyalty may at first sight appear matters of but slight relevance, but, we in Canada, with our large Celtic admixture, must see their importance, especially in dealing with the masses.

Attention to the beginnings of great national events and movements shows the symbol to occupy a prominent place. As illustration, millinery, ecclesiastic, military or civic is found practically necessary to render the machinery of the several functions perfectly effective. Spontaneous and involuntary respect is yielded to persons whose dress (a mere symbol) denotes their investiture with authority. Deference becomes an instinct before a uniform.

Love of home and early associations has given us many symbols. The Eastern fig tree, the English fireside, even the American old oaken bucket, all are symbols to conjure sweet thoughts of home. How much more does an emblem of national interest appeal to the warm unreasoned enthusiasm of a subject.

A cry to rally round the flag brings love, pride, fortitude, and daring-do, in eager crowds to the front. The very tatters of the fluttering emblem are several lashes to the torrent of glorious memories, high emprise, and noble emulation, which swell the tide of battle to full flood.

How heart-inspiring too is a national air, a symbol that alike cheers the soldier on the field and fires with patriotic zeal the civilian at home. A national anthem, like England's, lifts the emotions beyond vulgar boast and lust of glory to the region of religious duty and loyal piety.

If the doctrine of loyalty become part of our school system, educationists well know the value of suitable emblems and symbols, and the trained instincts of the growing generation will rise obedient to whatever call maple leaf or Union Jack shall make, and the great bulk of the nation will yield as ready a response to motto or national hymn as ever did a select few, the Knights of old. The various school cadet corps, and the setting up of a Canadian flag are a good start in the right direction.

We would have our youth taught their relation to the State, and its dependence on their faithful discharge of dutiful service, for a happy condition of affairs. And since the hero's part may be played by but few, the only outlet for the loyalty of the vast majority lies in upholding the hands of authority, in worthy citizenship, to the full capacity of each one.

The impulse, the spirit of this new individualism, is abroad and ripe for guidance.

Communism, in the vulgar sense, is but its misdirected energy pushed to insane use. But the ideals of Plato's Republic, of Sir Thomas More's Utopia, of Primitive Christianity, held the mutual interdependence of State and individual a first essential to the common weal.

As it is, the myriad units in a nation too generally pursue sedulously their own selfish interests, expecting, should a call come, that some way or other, those who are paid for it, or such as have neither talent nor chance to push private concerns, will take up the cause of their country.

It is a happy-go-lucky faith and deserves the rebuke of disaster.

To Sum Up :

This virtue of loyalty is of the highest ethical value to the race :

As a factor in national success its presence is imperative :

To be perfectly effective it should be cultivated and directed to the wisest use, by all practical means.

There is nothing chimerical in the ideal of a community, a province, a widely spreading nation, so deeply imbued with a sense of duty and cordial service toward a State that is administered with closest attention to public welfare, as to make loyalty the distinctive characteristic of that people. It would be difficult to dare or daunt a people so equipped; well nigh impossible to bar the happy progress of a people so conditioned. Life amid such circumstances must become a gradation towards that existence

“ Where loyal hearts and true,
Stand ever in the light.”

